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A PORTRAIT.

Far to the north, where hardy Ulster spread
 Her cheerful lawns with many a snow white row
 Of linen cloths, (ah ! traffic nearly sped !
 To the rich trader, erst, the poor man's woe !)
 Ralph Browncloth lived, whose qualities to know
 'Twere worth to visit e'en some dreary shore,
 Where frost eternal reigns and tempests blow,
 And icebergs floating drift—but worth much more
 His native Downshire's hills, and vallies to explore

High lineage graced not his plebeian name,
 No ancient lumber his escutcheon bore ;
 His ancestors, unknown to squirely fame,
 The road of plodding life had travelled o'er.
 Yet did he only pride himself the more !
 As the first founder of his family,
 A far surpassing coat of arms he wore !
 Better the root of a wide spreading tree,
 Than on its topmost branch a little sprig to be !

Abundant were his stores ; for him full well
 Had worked the bleaching green through many a year
 Of patient labour—useless 'twere to tell
 The gathering process of his ample gear ;
 Yet never from his habits did appear
 Th' increasing fulness of his golden chest—
 Nay, he, in thriftiness still more severe,
 As swelled his purse, so each proud wish repressed,
 Nor 'mong his trading peers e'er strove to lift his crest.

The muse would paint his garb full blithely ;
 For colour none e'er decked his ample breast
 Save goodly brown, that sat right widely
 And in quaint sort—so much for coat and vest ;
 Nor need we linger long upon the rest—
 The stout drab breeches, or the white topped boots,
 The broad brimmed hat, which in some kind expressed
 Its wearer's genius ; well the spread leaf suits
 Such bargain-making skulls, as fail not of their fruits.

Yet mean I not by this to represent
 Our hero as of Quaker origin ;
 A Presbyterian he of rigid bent,
 Marked by his high cheek bones, and pointed chin,
 Stern brows, grim mouth, which seemed to think it sin
 Into a smile its hardness to relax ;
 And when he laughed, portentous was the grin,
 Direful the sound ; right seldom did he tax
 His jaws with such a jar, to mirth a strange climax !

But how shall I describe his eyes of grey ?
 Those light grey eyes, so small, so keen, so bright,
 Of cunning full, though somewhat set astray,
 (For one looked towards the left, the other right)
 Oblique reception of the solar light,
 From their close watchful sharpness, nothing drew ;
 Good use he made of that same double sight,
 On either side his interest to view—
 To seize the 'vantage time of gain, full well it knew.

Nor were his doors inexorably fast,
 For hungry guests his table sometimes spread,
 Supplied a rough, but plentiful repast.
 Then round the whiskey bottle swiftly sped :
 And often were the bowls replenished,

Till with intoxication leered the eye
Of each, save that fixed in the iron head
Of the stern host ; full vainly might you try
In him the least effect of liquor to descry.

When each revolving year brought back the day,
Fruitful of altercation more than cess ;
And in the parish church, the stiff array
Of grumbling clowns their neighbours used to press,
Eager to vote a small assessment less,
Who e'er missed Ralph from that contentious clan ?
Their leader grim, he stood in readiness
To question every vote, to thwart each plan,
And the last year's account with jealous glance to scan.

With Latin lore he troubled not his brain,
To skill in Greek he never made pretence ;
In sooth he thought all other knowledge vain,
Save that which served to multiply the pence.
What cared he for impassioned eloquence ?
What for a set of lines together strung ?
All bootless chiming, Ralph deemed want of sense ;
One silv'ry clink in his ear sweeter rung
Than all those dreaming fools, the bards, have ever sung.

Let crazy rhymers talk of "purling rills,"
Of "sleep inducing fountains murmur'ing nigh"—
Ralph thought the music of his washing mill,
And beetling engines, sweetest lullaby !
Transporting thought ! at ease in bed to lie,
Soothed by the money-making sounds to sleep ;
While all night long th' enduring engines ply—
While all night long the bleachers vigil keep,
Into his teeming bags whole piles of wealth to sweep !

Thus much of Ralph :—perhaps to market town
E'en still o'er muddy road, he jogs along ;
E'en still he bargains for the linen brown
Of weavers pale, 'midst many a clam'rous throng ;
But let that pass, together with my song,
Now fairly spent—no other thought remains,
No traits unmentioned to our wight belong,
Which can recal my dull prosaic brains,
That I may further weave in rough Spenserian strains.

DUNENSIS.

LAYING A GHOST.

In the town of Ballydiach, lived about eighty years ago, one of those old drinking swearing squires, who was said to have been enrolled a member of that blessed confraternity, called the Hell-fire Club.* The gentleman, to be sure, was not only a very jolly, but a very jolly-looking personage ; being as most toping squires usually are, of a high complexion, with a nose richly chased, and ornamented with rubies, carbuncles, and a considerable variety of those star-like gems, which shine in the glowing firmament of a good fellow's face. This jovial gentleman was said by many to have sold himself to the devil ; although it was asserted by others that no such sale had taken place ; and it was ironically added by the humorous vicar of the parish, that the bargain had been actually completed, but that the deeds could not be drawn up

* To some of our modern readers it may, perhaps, appear incredible that such a club as this should have existed in the land of saints—such was actually the case, however ; and that in the recollection of many still living.